



Department of  
Land Use & Transportation

WASHINGTON COUNTY, OREGON

**RROMAC**

RURAL ROADS OPERATIONS AND  
MAINTENANCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**July 12, 2018, 7:30 to 9:30 a.m.**

**Walnut Street Center, 1400 SW Walnut Street, MS 51  
Second Floor Training Room 1, Hillsboro, OR 97123-5625**

## MINUTES

**Members Present:** Allen Amabisca, Denny Hruby, Michael Jamieson, Daniel Morgan, Ken Moyle, Matt Pihl, Doug Riedweg, Gary Virgin, Lars Wahlstrom

**Absent:**

**County Staff Present:** Aaron Clodfelter, Melissa De Lyser, Steve Franks, Keith Lewis, Courtney Threewitt, Todd Watkins, Jennifer Williams, Joe Younkins

**Guests:** Diego Almonte Ruelas, Jeremy Nicholes, Cathy Wright

### Welcome, Introductions, and Approval of Minutes

Dan welcomed everyone to the meeting. Michael Jamieson made a motion to approve the June minutes. Lars seconded the motion; all were in favor and the minutes were approved as written.

### Guest Comments

Jeremy Nicholes said he came to the meeting to listen to options for improving rural gravel roads, including Local Improvement Districts (LIDs).

Cathy Wright said she lives on Timmerman Road and a section of the road is not paved. She is concerned with safety. She wants to understand the process for RROMAC and bring awareness to her concerns. She asked if the Vehicle Registration Fee (VRF) funding could be used to make improvements. She also wants to understand the matrix prioritization better and would eventually like to see Timmerman Road get chip sealed. She said gravel is difficult to deal with, there is a lot of traffic and Timmerman is used for a cut-through route. Brian Irish mentioned that a surface stabilization was just applied on Timmerman Road.

### Operations and Maintenance Update – Todd Watkins

Todd said Operations is doing its traditional summertime work activities and gearing up for this year's paving program and chip seal work (this treatment is applied over existing paved surfaces). Contractors are doing the paving work, while our crews are doing the chip seal work. He said approximately \$2 million is being invested in rural paving. Additionally, River Road will be widened south of Farmington toward the roundabout and completing wide shoulders for the entire length of the road.

Operations is using a contracted service to supplement the striping program. Staffing continues to be a challenge – staff levels are down even more than before.

Todd said there is a new communication tool to see current roadwork in the Roy Rogers/Scholls Ferry area. The website URL is [www.getusthere.org](http://www.getusthere.org).

### **Engineering and Construction Services Update – Joe Younkins**

Dan welcomed Joe Younkins, Acting ECS Division Manager, who shared a map showing all of the projects for this summer. ECS expects its largest bid coming up will be the Roy Rogers road work. Several bids have been opened lately and the numbers are higher than expected. Aggregate, concrete, asphalt, excavation and fuel costs are all higher than expected. These high costs are driving project costs up.

Joe mentioned the following upcoming projects:

- [Roy Rogers Road](#) between Scholls Ferry and Bull Mountain roads will be a two-year project working with Willamette Water.
- [Tualatin-Sherwood Road](#) widening is in the design phase. The only section that will not be five lanes will be from Chicken Creek to Beef Bend Road. This project is funded by MSTIP.
- [Springville Road](#) widening will be funded by MSTIP and Transportation Development Tax, in partnership with Portland Community College.

ECS does not plan on canceling any projects due to the increased costs but some might be delayed a year or more. There are projects scheduled through 2023; the worst case is some may be postponed longer. The Clark Hill Bridge bid was received Wednesday, July 11. It came in a little higher than expected but still manageable.

Lars asked if there was anything that RROMAC could do to help with aggregate and gravel costs. Doug Riedweg recommended that Planning staff present an update on smaller quarries to RROMAC. Todd said he will get an update and share it with the group at the next meeting.

Michael asked about a new quarry he saw Washington County using. Keith said the quarry did not meet specifications at first, then they cleaned up its samples, but it still lacks consistency. Joe said finding quality rock is an issue we continue to have.

### **Overview of “FY 2018-19 Road Maintenance Program” and FY 2018-19 Operations and Maintenance Division Budget – Todd Watkins**

At the joint URMDAC/RROMAC meeting in March there was a presentation about the budget. Todd handed out hard copies of the Fiscal Year 2018/19 “Road Maintenance Program.” Todd referred to the VRF and House Bill 2017.

Washington County adopted the FY 2018/19 budget in June. Operations will receive \$37,571,559 for FY 18-19, which is a 30 % increase from last year. Todd shared a PowerPoint presentation, "[FY 18-19 Operations and Maintenance Budget & Work Program Summary](#)," showing the multi-year plan by work group, category and distribution. The replacement of vehicles is also a part of the plan and is spread out over the years instead of having to pay all at once.

Gary Virgin asked Todd to point out where landscaping is shown in the work program. Todd said it's under contracted vegetation and is listed in their regular work program. In addition, contractors are hired to do landscaping under the engineering contracts section.

Todd explained money is allocated in the budget for unscheduled maintenance, while two-thirds of work is scheduled (programmed). The centerline miles of rural and urban roads are almost identical (rural: 625.82; urban: 668.68), although the urban area has significantly more lane miles (rural: 38%; urban: 62%). Todd shared that the urban roads received approximately 2/3 of expenditures, although the population distribution is 5% rural, 95% urban.

### **Discussion of "the Public Interest" – Todd Watkins**

Todd said the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) has defined through policy what public interest means for us. He referenced the "Road Maintenance Priority matrix" (on page vii) in the [Road Maintenance Program](#). Washington County tries to get best value for the money and best value for the community. Pages viii, ix, and x illustrate the levels of service that we try to achieve while page 102 reflects the newly titled table ("2018-19 Annual Corridor Inspections") that used to be titled "Roads Not Maintained". This change in the way we approach these road segments is a good example of how the committee influenced the county's view of public interest. Going forward these road segments will be reviewed/inspected once a year and if maintenance is needed, a service request will be entered (this is considered unscheduled work).

Michael asked about maintenance of Pottratz Road. Todd said the BCC decided not to maintain that particular road. Pottratz Road maintenance would not be funded by regular programs.

Dan asked if some projects will be updated or funded now that we have different funding available. Todd explained that ECS takes care of bridge replacements and large projects. For example, maintenance funds are used to fix a bridge, but different funding is used to replace a bridge. There are some local roads that serve the rural community for agriculture or timber (Rural Local roads) but get equal funding as a collector. These roads are called "Rural Resource Roads". Providing an enhanced treatment on those roads benefits those resource-based businesses.

Michael asked why timber roads are separate. Todd explained they are rural resource roads and we work with Oregon Department of Forestry to identify timber harvests where those roads will see increased traffic from vehicles associated with the timber industry. We get a small portion of funds related to timber revenue annually, and we provide maintenance on those roads.

Lastly, Todd pointed out that another metric for comparison is based on “per capita spending”. For the urban area, the annual road maintenance expenditure is approximately \$26 per person while in the rural area it is \$263.

### **Discussion of Potential County/Private Sector Partnerships to Upgrade Gravel Roads – Todd Watkins**

Cathy Wright (guest) asked about tables listed in the Gravel Road Upgrade, dating from 2012. Todd said the Gravel Road Upgrade lists are snapshots in time from the Gravel Road Upgrade program which no longer exists.

Todd said that previously, RROMAC developed a complex prioritization model to upgrade gravel roads based on a variety of factors. Currently, maintenance of our existing assets is the first priority. The revenue from the Vehicle Registration Fee gives us the opportunity to potentially revisit the Gravel Road Upgrade program.

Todd said that Pihl Road is a “poster child” for various road conditions, with the portion nearest the highway paved, the middle portion chip sealed, and beyond that it is gravel. Todd explained that a few years ago Jeremy Nicholes and some of his neighbors expressed interest in paving the gravel portion of Pihl Road beyond the existing chip seal. A neighborhood meeting was held with staff, but when staff laid out the costs involved, the residents were not interested. Jeremy called recently expressing an interest to discuss the issue again. Todd and Steve met recently with Jeremy and one of his neighbors to discuss options. During the meeting, the question arose as to whether the County would consider paying for a portion of the cost of a LID if the County were doing work adjacent to the area to be upgraded?

At this time we don't plan to do anymore chip seals on gravel surfaces. Our approach is to build the roads in a more robust way utilizing asphalt. Whenever we upgrade a road from gravel to a hard surface, no matter what the material is, we need a 20 foot wide corridor to build a road plus drainage area. Creating a hard surface road generally leads to higher speeds. Ken Moyle asked why Washington County made the decision not to do chip seal on gravel roads. Todd said we use a different material now and it is like an egg shell that cannot produce high performance. It would not be able to handle the loads.

Looking at a potential future Gravel Road Upgrade program, to illustrate potential costs, staff took the top 10 candidates from the 2012 list plus Pihl Road since it has been identified specifically as an interest, and looked at upgrade costs. (The costs staff estimated are for discussion purposes only; no site analysis was done since this exercise was used simply to create an example) See [Gravel Road Upgrade Review and Analysis](#) spreadsheet for RROMAC.

Todd explained there are three funding options for upgrading gravel roads, with the first being an LID.

Local Improvement District (LID): This is a formal process involving the Board of Commissioners. At least 51% of the property owners have to support the LID. Costs are imposed on property owners whether they want the improvements, or not. Costs can be repaid over 10 years.

Co-Op: This is when a limited number of property owners pool their money together and pay the county to perform the work. Pre-payment of the work is required but there is no obligation for anyone to participate.

Right-of-Way permit: This is when one or more property owners hire a private contractor to perform the work. The county provides the specifications for the work but the contract is solely between the property owners and the contractor.

Todd said some funding from the VRF will be used to maintain what has already been built. He asked the committee if they want to consider gravel road upgrades in 7 to 8 years. The committee discussed safety issues for weather-related issues, including seasonal maintenance, plowing or other treatments with gravel roads vs paved roads. Todd asked what the committee thinks about potentially jump starting the gravel road upgrade system, and if so, what the elements would be: timing, costs, etc.

Todd also said he highly recommended when a LID is formed, that the group also forms a Maintenance Local Improvement District (MLID) as part of the LID, to provide funding for maintenance of the improved road. This request would go to the BCC with a LID proposal and the MLID would be formed at the same time to maintain the road.

Michael asked about maintenance of orphan sections of roads? Todd answered that it is not allowed; a road needs to have a continuous hard surface.

Each committee member was given a chance to share their thoughts on the idea of potentially starting up a new Gravel Road Upgrade program.

Gary said he was on RROMAC when the original gravel road upgrade started. He said he approves of having the list and supports LIDs, as long as an MLID is also implemented. He said he would lean heavily on requiring a new LID to have an MLID formed with it.

Lars said he thinks LIDs are not really fair and could be ripped apart by residents because of the cost.

Dan said equity is a concern. He is concerned that if a new upgrade program were initiated with the County paying a part of the upgrade cost, would the County consider reimbursement of past LIDs?

Michael said he doesn't think it is time for county to take on additional work; they need to take care of what they already have. He said the priority should be bridges and other maintenance first. He also wants an annual traffic count on gravel roads done.

Denny said his thinking is in line with Michael. He agrees that we need to plan but we need to know where the funding will come from and what is available first. He mentioned the LID on Jacktown Road has failed and where is the tool to fix that before it completely fails?

Ken said County should assume maintenance for the roads if a LID is created.

Doug said development is beating up the roads. He also said the urban folks use rural roads to get where they need to go. Some of these roads need to be renamed as urban roads. Some of that money needs to come to the connector roads. He said he agrees with Michael too; we need to fix what we have first. He did not agree with the rule that 51% of neighbors can decide to create an LID, which then everyone within the area must pay for. He is concerned about costs imposed on citizens.

Allen said he is okay with LIDs if the percentage is more than 51%. Traffic counts are critical to find out why the traffic has increased. He would like us to look at what we are not going to do if we upgrade roads. LIDs would work best with an MLID, but control is needed and a future plan is necessary. He said he is okay with cost sharing or whatever Washington County decides is the best choice. He would like to see good clarification and explanation why a road is chosen.

Matt said he agrees having the matrix or list so people are informed and know in "X" amount of years their road may be upgraded. He thinks Washington County should contribute to the costs. He said there is no "bang for the buck" right now with costs.

Todd asked if this was an accurate summary of generally what RROMAC members had expressed: the County should preserve what it has as a first priority; the County should not spend money on a gravel road upgrade program but residents should use the LID option for financing upgrades, and a high level of participation should be required when neighbors want to upgrade their gravel road. Consensus was that accurately summarized main points.

### **Confirm Meeting Follow-Up/Action Items: What and Who?**

The committee would like an update on the ordinance related to easing the restrictions on quarry operations and whether anyone has taken advantage of these new rules. Also, Michael would like to have the situation with Pottratz Road revisited. Todd said he could provide updates to both of these in his Ops report to RROMAC.

For the next meeting, the committee will review/revisit the gravel road upgrade prioritization model that RROMAC used previously.

### **Discuss Next Meeting and Agenda**

The committee will not meet in August. The next meeting will be September 13.

### **Miscellaneous**

Dan shared a legal definition and artistic definition of “public interest” and stated Todd touched on each point.

Lars complimented Brian on creating the spreadsheet document that showed the upgrade cost estimates.

Gary made a motion to adjourn. Michael seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

**Next meeting:** September 13, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m.